



## Clark County Health Department Fact Sheet

### Safe Drinking Water After a Disaster

Safe drinking water is essential to preserve life and avoid sickness. A disaster such as a flood or earthquake may cause contamination of your water supply with raw sewage or toxic chemicals. If there is any chance of your water being contaminated, do not drink it, use it for food preparation or use it in any way that may put your life at risk.

- Contaminated water can cause many serious illnesses.
- Use only purified water or water stored for an emergency until your normal water supply is safe.

The American Red Cross gives the following tips for emergency storage and purification:

#### Tap water

- Store water in clean plastic containers such as soft drink bottles with tight-fitting screw caps.
- Do not use milk bottles - they do not seal well.
- **Use all stored water within six months.**

#### Well or spring water (untreated)

- Store water in clean plastic containers such as soft drink bottles with tight-fitting screw caps.
- Do not use milk bottles.
- Add 16 drops of liquid chlorine bleach (a full 1/8 tsp., or slightly less than 1 ml) per gallon of water
- Use bleach with active ingredient of only 5.25% sodium hypochlorite; no added soap or fragrances.
- **Use all stored water within six months.**

#### Commercial "spring" or bottled drinking water

- Keep the water in its original sealed container.
- Once the bottle has been opened and used, **do not store it further.**

**For more information, call the Health Department at (360) 397-8428.**